Friends Press On With Plans Mihajlov Laid

By John Earle
Reuters

ZADAR, Yugoslavia, Aug. 9 Five friends of arrested anti-Communist intellectual Mihajlo Mihajlov said today that they will push ahead with plans for founding an independent Socialist magazine despite the absence of their leader in prison.

The five issued a declaration of principles saying their aim was "to participate actively in building our free and democratic future."

The declaration said the country's Communist leadership, because of its "confused and opportunist acts," had only minimal chances of solving Yugoslavia's economic problems.

They said a quarter of a century of Communist rule had resulted in a totalitarian attitude in people's minds and a loss of democracy in people's spirits.

At the same time, the declaration praised the Communist Party for leading the revolt against facism in 1941 and said that at times the Party was able to act in a nondogmatic and realistic manner.

"In this respect, the figure of (President) Josip Broz Tito had a dominant importance and in consequence his historical greatness for Yugoslavia cannot be belittled and is lasting," the declaration added.

The five have asked permission to hold a meeting here on Thursday to go ahead with plans for founding their magazine.

Earlier, the five friends said their leader Mihajlov was arrested for his hostile writings and for planning to convene a hostile assembly.

The friends quoted a police official as saying the writer was also detained for his own safety.

Mihajlov, 32, was arrested at the district court of Zadar, the Adriatic port city where he lives, and ordered detained for three days.

The arrest took place only two days before he and his supporters planned a meeting to launch a new magazine as the nucleus for a legally constituted democratic Socialist party, in defiance of President Tito and his regime.

Investigating Magistrate Ante Grabusic said Mihajlov was being investigated for "a renewal of criminal activities," but had not been accused of anything.

Mihajlov received a 5-month suspended prison sentence last year for writing articles on Russian concentration camps that were alleged to be offensive to the Soviet Union.

His friends today asked police for permission to go ahead with their planned meeting Wednesday. One member of the group, history Prof. Daniel Kvin, said the police would rule on the request Wednesday morning.

Mahajlov's friends met this morning in the writer's apartment in a dilapidated Renaissance palace brightened by modern paintings. The group, made up of intellectuals about 30 years of age, form an organizing committee of six.

They said a police official called at the apartment today and explained the reasons for Mihajlov's arrest.